

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EUR-10 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 EB-03

COME-00 TRSE-00 L-02 RSR-01 /056 W

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O R 241606Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7015

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

CONFIDENTIAL BONN 12118

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, GW, LY

SUBJECT: GELSENBERG ROLE IN LIBYA

REF: TRIPOLI 1088

1. WHILE WE HAVE NOT TALKED TO GELSENBERG DIRECTLY, WE BELIEVE THAT THE IMPRESSION IN PARA 3 OF REFTEL IS CORRECT. GELSENBERG, AND THE FRG, HAVE TENDED TO ASSUME THAT GELSENBERG'S FATE IS LOCKED WITH MOBIL BY FORCE OF THE FACTS. IF THE LIBYANS, HOWEVER, WERE SHREWD ENOUGH TO DEVISE A STRATEGY WHICH WOULD APPEAR TO OFFER GELSENBERG A SUSTAINABLE, SEPARATE SETTLEMENT, GELSENBERG AS A COMPANY WOULD BE PUT IN A NEW AND VERY DIFFICULT POSITION.

2. EVEN WITH ITS LIBYAN OIL, GELSENBERG IS LOSING MONEY ON ITS REFINING OPERATIONS. IF IT HAD TO GO TO THE MARKET TO REPLACE THE CRUDE IT NOW GETS FROM LIBYA, CONFIDENTIAL

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THE FINANCIAL BLOW WOULD BE A VERY SEVERE ONE.

GELSENBERG WOULD ALSO BE CONCERNED ABOUT HOW IT CAN JUSTIFY TO ITS STOCKHOLDERS AN "AVOIDABLE" LOSS OF ITS LIBYAN ASSETS, AT A TIME WHEN THE STOCKHOLDERS ARE EXPECTING A HEALTHY BUY-OUT PRICE FROM VEBA.

3. AT THIS POINT, THE FRG'S INFLUENCE OVER GELSENBERG IS NOT GREAT. SCHUBERT IS GETTING HIS INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIS OWN FIRM. WE HAVE ALSO FOUND THIS WEEK, IN OUR DAILY CONTACT WITH THE ECONOMICS MINISTRY ON LIBYAN DEVELOPMENTS, THAT GELSENBERG HAS BEEN PROVIDING LESS INFORMATION TO THE MINISTRY THAN WE.

CASH

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